

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAA-01 SES-02 SSM-05 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 OMB-01
/064 W

-----069944 030841Z /21

O 030755Z AUG 78
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1446
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
USICA WASHDC

UNCLAS JERUSALEM 2110

USDEL NO 37

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OVIP (ATHERTON, ALFRED)
SUBJ: AMBASSADOR ATHERTON'S REMARKS TO THE PRESS AFTER MEETING
PRIME MINISTER BEGIN

1. FOLLOWING IS THE TRANSCRIPT OF AMBASSADOR ATHERTON'S REMARKS
TO THE PRESS AFTER HIS 1 1/4 HOUR MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER
BEGIN TODAY IN THE KNESSET.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

ATHERTON: I WOULD LIKE TO SAY THAT I'M VERY APPRECIATIVE
INDEED TO THE PRIME MINISTER FOR SO MUCH TIME THAT HE GAVE
ME TO REPORT TO HIM ON MY RECENT TALKS IN CAIRO, WHICH I DID
AT GREAT LENGTH. WE DISCUSSED A LITTLE BIT THE FORTHCOMING
VISIT OF SECRETARY VANCE AND THOSE WERE THE PRINCIPAL SUBJECTS
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OF THE MEETING TODAY. I DON'T REALLY THINK AT THIS STAGE,
WITH THE SECRETARY COMING SOON, THERE'S ANYTHING FURTHER
THAT I CAN ADD TO THAT.

QUESTION: WAS THERE ANY DISCUSSION OF LEBANON?

ATHERTON: YES, WE DID DISCUSS LEBANON BRIEFLY AT THE END.

QUESTION: WILL YOU HAVE ANY OTHER MEETINGS BEFORE SECRETARY VANCE COMES?

ATHERTON: THERE ARE NONE PRESENTLY SCHEDULED. I DON'T WANT TO SAY THAT THERE MAY NOT BE. IF IT WOULD SEEM USEFUL, OR IF THE FOREIGN MINISTER OR ANY OF HIS COLLEAGUES FEEL IT WOULD BE USEFUL, I'M ALWAYS AVAILABLE. BUT THERE ARE NO FURTHER MEETINGS SCHEDULED AT THIS POINT, BEFORE THE SECRETARY'S ARRIVAL.

QUESTION: MR. ATHERTON, GIVEN THE SECRETARY'S SCHEDULE, CAN WE NOW ASSUME THAT THERE WILL BE NO TALKS IN SINAI, AND THAT HE'LL BE IN ISRAEL AND EGYPT AND GO BACK TO WASHINGTON?

ATHERTON: THAT IS THE PRESENT EXPECTATION, YES. I THINK OUR PRESS SPOKESMAN MADE THAT PRETTY CLEAR IN ANSWERING QUESTIONS YESTERDAY IN WASHINGTON AND THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN THAT SITUATION.

QUESTION: DO YOU CONSIDER IT A FAILURE OF YOUR EFFORTS TO BRING AROUND THE NEXT DIRECT CONFERENCE?

ATHERTON: NO, I'M NOT GOING TO CHARACTERIZE THIS AT ALL WHILE WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO THE CONSULTATIONS THAT THE SECRETARY WILL HAVE WITH BOTH PRIME MINISTER BEGIN AND PRESIDENT SADAT, AS HE HAS ALREADY SAID, ABOUT WAYS IN

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WHICH IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO KEEP THE PEACE PROCESS GOING. I THINK WE SHOULD LEAVE IT AT THAT FOR NOW. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

BEGIN: AMBASSADOR ATHERTON WAS KIND ENOUGH TO INFORM US ABOUT THIS IN ALEXANDRIA WITH PRESIDENT SADAT AND FOREIGN MINISTER KAMEL. ISRAEL HAS TOLD AMBASSADOR ATHERTON IS FOR THE TRIPARTITE MEETING AT UM HASHIBA FOR DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL UNDER THE AMERICAN SPONSORSHIP. AND NOW WE SHOULD BE EXPECTING THE ARRIVAL OF SECRETARY VANCE ON SATURDAY NIGHT. WE SHALL START OUR TALKS WITH THE TWO DELEGATIONS ON SUNDAY AT 10:00 AM AND WE SHALL CONTINUE OUR TALKS IN THE AFTERNOON ON SUNDAY AND PERHAPS ALSO ON MONDAY MORNING UNTIL THE SECRETARY DEPARTS FOR EGYPT. AS MR. ATHERTON COULD HAVE TOLD US FOR THE TIME BEING, THERE IS NO POSITIVE REPLY FROM EGYPT ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF CONVENING BOTH ISRAEL AND EGYPT UNDER THE AMERICAN SPONSORSHIP AT UM HASHIBA. BUT LET US HOPE THAT THEY WILL CHANGE THEIR MINDS AND SUCH A MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE. ISRAEL CONTINUES TO WISH TO HAVE SUCH A MEETING AT UM HASHIBA.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978JERUSA02110
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780317-1177
Format: TEL
From: JERUSALEM
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197808103/aaaadiqf.tel
Line Count: 115
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a71b0358-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1550701
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMBASSADOR ATHERTON'S REMARKS TO THE PRESS AFTER MEETING PRIME MINISTER BEGIN
TAGS: OVIP, (ATHERTON, ALFRED)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a71b0358-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014